

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 EA-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 NEA-10 DRC-01 /158 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR MRN (1613 VICE 163)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TS, US, FR

SUBJECT: PARIS PRESS COMMENT ON MASMOUDI OUSTER

REF: TUNIS 0306

1. CLEAREST REACTION CAME FROM PHIIPE BERNERT IN AURORE JANUARY 15: "AT DJEBA, JOBERT'S MUSKETEERS ARE PLAYING A MAJOR GAME---THE FUSION NOT ONLY OF TUNISIA AND LIBYA, BUT OF THE ENRIRE MAGHREB, WITH EXTENSIONS INTO BLACK AFRICA. IT'S POMPIDOU'S BIG EURO-AFRICAN SCHEE". THREE MUSKETEERS IN QUESTION ARE FRENCH AMBASSADORS TO TUNIS (GAUCHER), ALGIERS (SOUTOU) AND RABAT (RAIMOND). BERNERT PORTRAYED MASMOUDI AS A VITAL LINK IN THIS PAN, AND WONDERED WHETHER HIS REMOVAL HASN'T EFFECTIVELY RUINED IT.

2. FIGARO SAME DAY PRINTED FIRST-PAGE ARTICLE BY SERGE BROMBERGER REPORTING THAT "BOMB" OF MASMOUDI'S OUSTER EXPLODED AFTER BOURGUIBA HAD RECEIVD US AND FRENCH AMBASSADORS. IN SAME ISSUE APPEARED MASMOUDI STATEMENT TO FIGARO THAT "I HOPE FOR THE SAKE OF HIS PRESTIGE THAT BOURGUIBA KEEPS HIS AGREEMENTS".

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3. IN LE MONDE JANUARY Q6, PHILIPPE HERREMAN WROTE IN LONG ARTICLE THAT "MASMOUDI FEELS HIMSELF VICTIM OF MANEUVERING. CERTAIN ASPECTS OF HIS POLICIES WERE HARDLY APPROVED BY THOSE WHO, LIKE BOURGUIBA, JR., PREFERRED A CLEARER ORIENTATION TOWARDS THE WEST, PARTICULARLY TOWARD THE US."

4. JANUARY 19 EDITION OF LE MONDE CARRIES LONG RESUME FROM TUNIS BY PAUL BALTA OF EVENTS SINCE JANUARY 8, IN WHICH HE SAYS MASMOUDI HAS BEEN TELLING ALL COMERS THAT HE LOST HIS JOB "FOR REASONS OTHER THAN THE ROLE HE WAS ABLE TO PLAY IN 'BRINGING LIBYA INTO THE MAGREBIAN CIRCLE.'" BALTA QUOTES HM AS FOLLOWS: "I'VE BEEN REPROACHED FOR AN ANTI-AMERICAN ATTITUDE A YEAR AGO WHEN I FAVORED VOTING FOR CHINA'S ENTRY INTO THE UN, AND FOR HAVING SHOWN SYMPATHY FOR THE BOMBED PEOPLE OF NORTH VIET NAM WHEN I VISITED HANOI. THE FACT IS THAT THE THEN-SECRETARY OF STATE, MR. ROGERS, WAS NOT HAPPY. BUT MR. KISSINGER...HAS SINCE REPLACED MR. ROGERS. THEY HAVE CONCOCTED STORIES THAT MR. NIXON HAS SAID THAT 'MR. MASMOUDI WILL NEVER SET FOOT IN THE WHITE HOUSE.' THEY SAID MR. KISSINGER DID NOT WANT TO SEE ME WHEN HE RECENTLY VISITED TUNIS. AT THAT TIME, SOME PEOPLE EVEN SUGESTED THAT IT TAKE A REST. I REPLIED THAT I WAS WELL AND IN EXCELLENT HEALTH. AND I WENT TO GREET MR. KISSINGER. I TOLD HIM: 'IF YOU DON'T WANT ME PRESENT AT YOUR TALK WITH THE PRESIDENT I'M READY TO STAY AWAY.' HE REPLIED: 'ABSOLUTELY NOT. NOT ONLY IS THERE NO REASON, BUT YOU ARE THE FIRST TO TALK TO ME ABOUT THE PALESTINIANS IN TERMS THAT I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN, AND I HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF REGARD FOR YOU.'" BALTA ADDS THAT, "IN THE ESSENTIALS, THE TONE OF THIS CONVERSATION" (HE PRESUMABLY MEANS BETWEEN SECRETARY AND MASMOUDI) "HAS BEEN CONFIRMED ON THE AMERICAN SIDE." DECON 12/31/75. STONE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Subject:** PARIS PRESS COMMENT ON MASMOUDI OUSTER  
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